

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 RSC-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 ISO-00 PM-07

NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 L-03 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USINT CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

INFO USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T STATE 219301

TOSEC 127 - ZFF CAIRO ONLY

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, UK, XF

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST

1. DURING NOVEMBER 5 TOUR-D'HORIZON ON MIDDLE EAST WITH ACTING SECRETARY, UK AMBASSADOR CROMER SAID HMG FELT THREE CONDITIONS MUST BE MET IF SITUATION WERE NOT TO UNRAVEL: (A) MAINTENANCE OF EFFECTIVE CEASEFIRE, (B) RESOLUTION OF THE POW ISSUE, AND (C) RETURN TO LINES OF OCT. 22. THESE WERE QTE QUINTESSENTIALLY IMPORTANT END QTE PREREQUISITES TO NEGOTIATIONS, NOT STEPS IN NEGOTIATION PROCESS ITSELF.

2. CROMER ALSO REPORTED THAT SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN LONDON
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HAD SOUGHT HIGH LEVEL (PRESUMABLY DOUGLAS-HOME) HMG CONTACT

ON NOV. 4 TO AIR CURRENT SOVIET THINKING. ACCORDING TO CROMER, THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR UNDERLINED IMPORTANCE OF WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES TO OCT. 22 LINES. HE ALSO STRESSED THAT SOVS WANTED TO PRESERVE DETENTE WITH US, BUT FEARED ISRAELI ABILITY TO EXERT PRESSURE IN US LEFT POSSIBILITY IN DOUBT. PREDICTABLY, SOVS ALSO SAID US ALERT WAS UNWARRANTED. BRITS REPLIED THEY WERE FULLY INFORMED OF THE ALERT AND HAD NO PROBLEMS WITH IT. THEY ALSO POSED QUESTION OF WHY USSR COULD NOT AT THIS JUNCTURE PERSUADE SADAT TO NEGOTIATE WITH ISRAEL.

3. RUSH EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE REPORT ON THE SOVIET APPROACH AND OBSERVED THAT UK QTE QUINTESSENTIAL END QTE ELEMENTS WERE INDEED VITAL. BUT QUESTIONS SUCH AS HOW TO BREAK THE POW DEADLOCK AND WHAT WERE THE OCTOBER 22 LINES WOULD NOT BE EASY TO RESOLVE. WE FELT ON THE LATTER POINT THAT EGYPT WAS MORE INTERESTED IN A ROAD TO THE THIRD ARMY THAN A RETURN TO OCT. 22 LINES PER SE. OF COURSE, THE ROAD TO SUEZ WAS ALSO VITAL TO EGYPTIAN CONCERNS.

4. IN REPLY TO CROMER'S QUERY, RUSH CONFIRMED THAT WE HAD FOUND MRS. MEIR RATHER INFLEXIBLE IN LAST WEEK'S TALKS AND ATTRIBUTED THIS TO HER FEARS FOR ISRAEL'S VERY SURVIVAL. EVENTS OF OCTOBER HAVE REINFORCED ISRAELI FEELINGS THAT THEY CAN RELY ON NO ONE BUT THEMSELVES, AND HAVE OBSCURED REALIZATION THAT THEIR OCCUPATION OF ARAB LAND WAS CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR IN THESE EVENTS. CROMER CLOSED BY EXPRESSING HOPE THAT THE SECRETARY'S TRIP WOULD BE INSTRUMENTAL IN GETTING NEGOTIATIONS UNDERWAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST.
RUSH

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